

# The Classroom *Can* Be All Fun & Games

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This essay will explain how a particular videogame, *PeaceMaker*, can be used in dispute resolution classes. In January 2007, ImpactGames introduced *PeaceMaker*, a video game simulation about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in which the participants take on the role of either the Israeli Prime Minister or the Palestinian President. The participant/politician then “plays the computer” as events unfold, facing decisions about how to move the peace process forward. A “win” achieves peace in the Middle East and the Nobel Peace Prize. Conversely, a “loss” results in being voted out of office or even triggering a Third Intifada.<sup>1</sup>

This simulation is a teaching mechanism that allows students to gain hands-on experience in applying several dispute resolution concepts as they work toward achieving peace and winning the game. *PeaceMaker* serves as a model for understanding international conflict by illustrating the interdependency among nations and the influence of various options as well as absent parties on a peaceful solution. This videogame is unique because it demonstrates the broad impact a single decision can have on multiple and sometimes divergent groups within a conflict, and how each group’s various

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<sup>1</sup> The authors acknowledge and respect that this game may be offensive due to the seriousness of the material. The balance between respecting atrocities that take place in the world and incorporating relevant real world examples to encourage conflict resolution is not often easy. For example, relatives of fallen Marines have voiced concern, anger, and opposition to a videogame set in Fallujah. See Dan Ephron, *The Battle Over the Battle of Fallujah: A Videogame So Real It Hurts*, NEWSWEEK, June 15, 2009, at 41–42.

perceptions can then affect the next action taken. *PeaceMaker* provides participants the opportunity to immerse themselves within a conflict where they are required to employ their knowledge of dispute resolution techniques when choosing a course of action. As the game progresses, participants can evaluate decisions through trial and error. If participants assess conflicts incorrectly and lose, the game allows for endless opportunities to try again and to make a different choice that may produce more peaceful results.

The medium of the game also provides an interesting alternative to dispute resolution students and helps expose them to some of the issues of online dispute resolution. Typically, students learn which dispute resolution technique to apply in various conflicts through in-person role-plays. These role-plays often take place during class time, with characters and conflicts assigned to their classmates. In these moments students are able to respond to one another by reading body language and other methods used by lawyers to effectively resolve conflicts in office settings. *PeaceMaker* allows our technology-savvy students the opportunity to experience conflicts in which they cannot read the body language of their opponent. In addition to the inability of a student to “read” their computer opponent, the conflict operates on a much larger world scale than a classroom scenario can provide.

This article will proceed as follows: Part II will discuss the creation of “serious” gaming—videogames with a message beyond pure entertainment. Part III will introduce *PeaceMaker* and provide a general description of the overall structure and functions of the game. Part IV will elaborate on the ways *PeaceMaker* can be used in the classroom as a teaching mechanism. Part V will detail some concepts that can be introduced to students and then applied through gameplay. Finally, Part VI will provide some conclusions about the applicability of serious games like *PeaceMaker* in teaching theories of international conflict resolution and the usefulness of video game simulation in teaching and applying different principles within the dispute resolution field.

## II. HISTORY OF SERIOUS GAMES

To many professors, the idea of “serious” and “gaming” in the same phrase seems oxymoronic. But as serious games have developed, we have seen that the critical thinking necessary to succeed in playing serious games is the same kind of thinking we want to encourage in our students as they learn the dispute resolution concepts we teach in class.

Teachers, politicians, economists, and military personnel employ computer games to simulate the application of differing frameworks to a

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particular problem.<sup>2</sup> By assuming decisionmaking roles and utilizing previously acquired knowledge, gamers can step outside their own perspective and further their understanding of the issues at stake in a wide range of conflicts. For example, in 1957, Northwestern University developed the *Inter-Nation Simulation* (INS), which used teams of participants representing imaginary nations to determine the best allocation of natural resources for consumption, investment, and defense to study the effects of this allocation on political stability and economic growth.<sup>3</sup> President Kennedy used simulations during his 1960 presidential campaign when determining which issues he should emphasize by simulating voter response in relationship to mass voting trends.<sup>4</sup> Each of these applications applied pre-existing theories of social and political interdependency as a means of identifying distinct causal relationships between different variables.

Similarly, computer game simulations in international relations illustrate the impact that nations can have on one another in shaping national and international policy. In 1985, Chris Crawford released the computer game *Balance of Power*, the predecessor for the more recent serious games, and initiated a new type of conflict simulation game. Hailed for its ingenuity, *Balance of Power* incorporated diplomatic, economic, and military solutions with the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. The two primary goals were to serve an eight-year presidential term without causing nuclear war and to gain more “prestige” than the opposition.<sup>5</sup> Although Chris Crawford developed *Balance of Power* for recreation, international relations theorists soon recognized its applicability as a method of clarifying the complexities of global politics.<sup>6</sup> Subsequently, software development companies began exploring the possibility of creating serious games that model real world systems and situations.

The purpose of serious games varies. Public interest organizations develop games to raise awareness concerning a variety of issues ranging from health care and policy to nonviolent methods of resolving international conflict. For example, the U.S. military developed *Close Combat: First to Fight*, a tactical training simulation.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, an educational software

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<sup>2</sup> John N. Drobak, Note, *Computer Simulation and Gaming: An Interdisciplinary Survey with a View Toward Legal Applications*, 24 STAN. L. REV. 712, 715–18, 720–23 (1972).

<sup>3</sup> Robert Mandel, *An Evaluation of the “Balance of Power” Simulation*, 31 J. CONFLICT RESOL. 333, 337 (1987).

<sup>4</sup> Drobak, *supra* note 2, at 716–17.

<sup>5</sup> Mandel, *supra* note 3, at 335.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 338.

<sup>7</sup> Josh Schollmeyer, *Games Get Serious*, 62 BULL. ATOM. SCIENTISTS 35, 36 (2006).

company developed *Immune Attack*, through which students experience the challenges of the human immune system.<sup>8</sup> Organizations also use serious games to bring attention to humanitarian crises and illustrate the impact that these crises can have on the broader world. One of the most popular games is *Food Force*, developed by the United Nations' Food Programme and designed to teach children about delivering international aid to struggling parts of the world.<sup>9</sup> The reach of these games can be quite broad. For example, within its first month of release, over 700,000 people played *Darfur is Dying*, a game developed by MTV in which players escape the Janjaweed while searching for water to support a village.<sup>10</sup> The success of these games is attributed to the ability of the computer simulation to immerse individuals in a complex situation so that they can see it more clearly, and that "[e]ven if the gameplay is simple and intuitive, the strategies require thoughtful choices that often yield difficult consequences."<sup>11</sup>

Students are able to learn the importance of strategy and thoughtful choices when playing serious games because they are met with immediate results. *PeaceMaker* creates a new approach to teaching dispute resolution theory and putting it into practice by merging the principles of traditional dispute resolution concepts with a complex series of interactions and players.<sup>12</sup>

### III. HOW TO PLAY *PEACEMAKER*

When playing *PeaceMaker*, the objective is to create a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.<sup>13</sup> By positioning players as either the leader of Palestine or Israel, the creators of *PeaceMaker* challenge individuals to develop cooperative strategies and evaluate the results through trial and error as they work for peace. In developing this strategy, players must consider not only their counterpart but also domestic and international constituencies.

As the game begins, players are immediately in the center of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The screen flashes with news footage

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<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 35.

<sup>9</sup> Clive Thompson, *Saving the World, One Video Game at a Time*, N.Y. TIMES, July 23, 2006, at A2. This game has reached over four million downloads since its release and is available in over four languages. *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> Schollmeyer, *supra* note 7, at 37.

<sup>12</sup> ROBERT AXELROD, *THE EVOLUTION OF COOPERATION* 124-42 (1984).

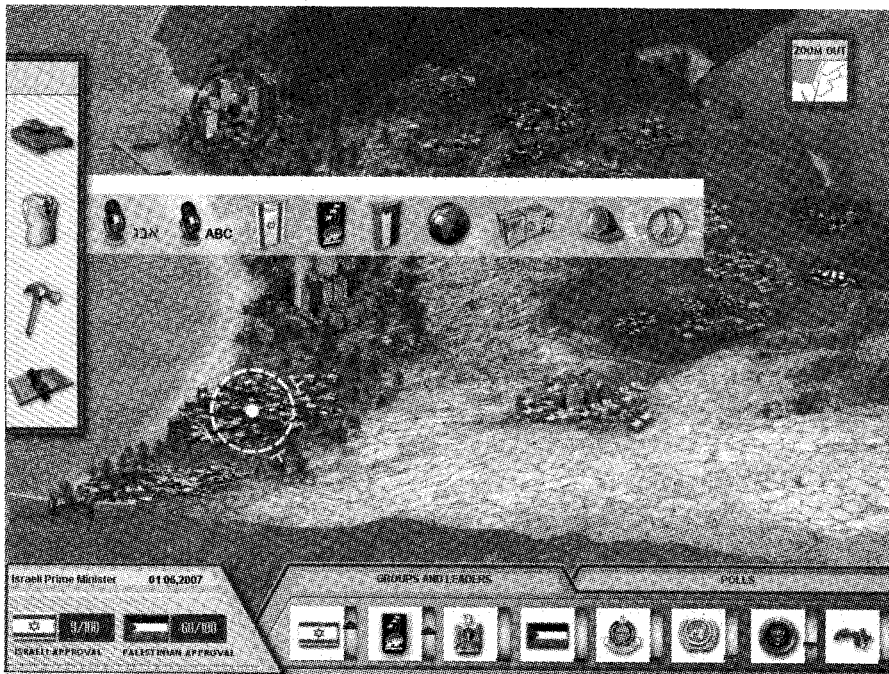
<sup>13</sup> We recognize that this objective is not shared among all relevant players in the real conflict, and a professor could usefully have a class discussion about trying to reach agreement with "spoilers."

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highlighting important events from 1948 to the present, including images of suicide bombings, Israeli tanks traveling through Palestinian villages, and the signing of the Sinai Peace Accords. As the images roll and the background music reaches a crescendo, players feel the weight of the conflict fall upon their shoulders as they assume the role of the Palestinian President or the Israeli Prime Minister. As a feature of the game, players are able to select calm, tense, or violent levels of conflict which impact the frequency of violent conflict or negative events during the game.

The players' primary focus is to respond to positive, neutral, or negative events that occur during gameplay. These events occur in major towns and cities in the region and are displayed on a three-dimensional interactive map as shown below.

*PeaceMaker* as Israeli Prime Minister:  
Option Bar with Diplomatic Options Extended



Players respond to these events by selecting from a variety of diplomatic or security measures. *PeaceMaker* is not entirely reactionary, however. Successful players learn to adopt a proactive approach to issues and events that could arise within their prospective country, taking into account more

than just their adversary. As either the Palestinian or Israeli leader, players also must represent the concerns of their domestic constituents as they mold their international policies to meet the needs and demands of national groups.

National constituencies include the general public and extremist groups. The demands, intervention, and support of the United Nations and other nations play a significant role in players' strategies and in their ability to complete the game successfully. An icon located on a "Groups and Leaders" panel represents these additional actors. A "thermometer" is included to indicate each additional actor's respective approval or disapproval of the leader's actions or the game events. Furthermore, each additional actor is given a "degree" of approval that represents his or her overall positive or negative response to the current climate. Because the reaction of additional actors to game events and decisions is based on their own agenda, successful players must implement policies that meet the needs and demands of as many entities as possible.

*PeaceMaker* as Israeli Prime Minister:  
Bottom Tool Bar with Approval Ratings and Groups & Leaders Bar  
Showing



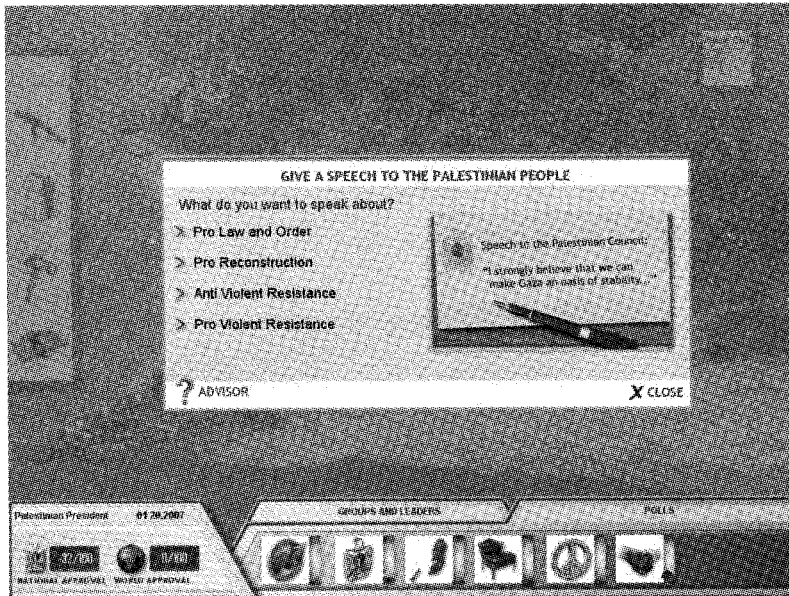
Besides the "Groups and Leaders" ratings, players must also consider a series of polls that reflect the impact of their policies on their nation's economy, leadership, sympathy, and cooperation. These polls influence that leader's overall score and serve to guide the leader in determining which policies to implement based on need. The need for a particular initiative influences whether an action will be successful. Maintaining a high degree of approval is the most difficult aspect of the game because it requires the player to successfully counterbalance the needs and demands of one's constituency with the pressures and demands placed upon the leader by both external forces and resource constraints.

Players' ultimate success within the game is dependent upon the actions they use in responding to events throughout the game. Consequently, a player's ratings will rise or fall when taking particular actions and each player must choose among security, political, and construction actions. For example, the slide below demonstrates the types of speeches a Palestinian president could make to the Palestinian people. To help the decisionmaking process, players are able to ask for advice from two advisors. These advisors

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often give contradicting advice, however, and players must determine which decision advances their strategies most effectively.

### *PeaceMaker* as Palestinian President: Options for Giving a Speech to the Palestinian President



The players' resources reflect the legitimate and often limited resources available to the real world leader whose role they have assumed. For example, the Palestinian President is dependent upon international aid and investment to implement social programs, whereas the Israeli Prime Minister has adequate financial resources to make independent financial contributions.

Game mechanisms encourage players to experiment with different types of actions. Players cannot successfully make speeches to the same group or consistently ask to speak with their adversaries. The game mechanism prevents players from doing so by using a "warning window" that explains that their constituents are tired of hearing speeches or that the adversaries want to see a policy implemented before they will take another meeting. In addition to restrictions on actions, new options only become available as players successfully respond to negative events and gain greater domestic and international support (e.g., the Palestinian President can open his or her borders for tourism only after reaching a certain level of stability in the game).

Finally, players' overall score equates to their success as leaders and is reflected by two scores that range from 100 to -100. During the game, players must complete four milestones before they can reach a two-state solution, and they successfully complete the game when their score reaches 100. Players achieve the milestones by successfully implementing their policies and strategies, which are reflected in their overall approval ratings. The victorious player is then awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The less successful players, on the other hand, can be voted out of office or may incite the Third Intifada by taking too many adversarial or one-sided actions without balancing the needs of both their constituents and their counterparts. Some examples of these one-sided actions include a player consistently taking military action, placing stringent restrictions on certain groups, or making violent and non-conciliatory speeches to national and international communities. As indicated by its name, players win *PeaceMaker* by making or establishing peace; the key to victory is finding that delicate balance between authoritative action and cooperation with your counterparts.

#### IV. HOW TO USE THE GAME IN THE CLASSROOM

*PeaceMaker* can be used in a variety of ways to teach dispute resolution concepts in the classroom because it gives students the opportunity to experiment with different techniques in a way that role-play simulations cannot provide. Because the game can be played over and over with different results, there is much room for using the game in a variety of pedagogical methods. In addition, the videogame is particularly appealing to visual learners and, we expect, very easy for this generation of learners to utilize.

We have first generally introduced this game in the larger classroom both because it is easier to do a single introduction to the game rather than multiple ones and because it produces quite interesting class discussions. We initially have students play as a class on one screen in front of the class so that they can develop a basic understanding of the game itself and have the opportunity to hear how their peers react to the same series of events. As a game played by the class, students debate openly their choices for action, their assumptions, and their goals for the negotiation. In an international conflict class, the game can also be used as a general introduction to some of the theories explained further below. On a more sophisticated level, the group decisionmaking process itself can be discussed: How did the class reach a consensus about what action to take? Did the group “go to extremes” as discussed in conflict resolution literature? Was the group subject to “groupthink”?



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We have also used the game in teams of two or three where students have more of an opportunity to really participate in the decisionmaking. This format provides two additional learning opportunities. With a team, it is easier to designate one teammate as the reporter to note which options are chosen and what results occur so that, in the next round of playing the game, the team can compare their earlier decisions with their current choices. By tracking their actions, students can analyze the decisions that they made during gameplay and can also compare their personal strategies with those of their peers. Also, the format of teams provides conversation about how each team made its choices (majority rule, consensus, loudest, etc.) and can help illuminate team negotiation strategies to the class.

Finally, the game can clearly be played individually (and many students have found it sufficiently compelling to do so regardless of class assignments.) Students playing the game individually can test different strategies and learn to overcome challenges. Students that win in a calm scenario can then play the game again in a tense or violent scenario. This challenges students and requires them to go beyond their initial game strategies and develop new ones. This is helpful for both individual learning processes and classroom discussion. In addition, letting students explore the game individually permits students to learn at their own pace and also to review the lessons reached in class. Again, while role-plays cannot often be repeated by students on their own time, this game provides exactly that opportunity for students to review their choices, make different choices, and learn from those results. Given the multitude of conflict theories that students can learn and test in the game, this opportunity for individual learning and review is invaluable. Students can learn at their own pace and in their own space. Depending on how professors structure their class, students can also use the game and its lessons as the basis for journals and longer research papers.

In terms of other logistics, we have used the game both in short and long courses in international conflict resolution and have offered it as additional coursework in a general negotiation course. *PeaceMaker* is inexpensive (approximately \$20) and is available for download from the internet, which makes it easy for students to purchase. Depending on the class and other assigned reading, we have required students to each download a copy as part of their required materials for class, or have had the school purchase a limited number of copies of the game and placed it on laptops available for students to check out.

## V. CONCEPTS ONE CAN TEACH

A game concerning the Middle East is certainly fertile ground for examining a host of different dispute resolution concepts. We discuss below those we have found most salient when playing the game; we assume other professors will find many more applications. We taught concepts in three particular areas: (A) understanding the other side and, more specifically, partisan perceptions,<sup>14</sup> role reversal, and the ladder of inference;<sup>15</sup> (B) option creation and use and analysis of the effect of multiple similar options in a negotiation;<sup>16</sup> and (C) two-level diplomacy<sup>17</sup>—negotiations where there are many constituents that must be pleased in addition to the primary parties in the negotiation.

*A. The Concept of the Other**1. Partisan Perceptions*

By requiring players to step into the shoes of world leaders and work towards a peaceful two-state solution, *PeaceMaker* provides students with the opportunity to explore partisan perceptions and the challenges faced by leaders who are pursuing goals while meeting the varied demands of their citizens. Students who play the game and record their actions can not only gain self-awareness but can also make observations from three points of view: (1) their own, (2) the point of view of the other party, and (3) the point of view of a neutral third party. In analyzing a singular series of actions, students can experience first-hand the effect that each lens can have on one's view of the situation.

First, by recording their actions, players can analyze their responses and determine why their actions did or did not lead to success. This allows students to develop an understanding of why they reacted to events in the manner that they did. For example, as the Palestinian President there are

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<sup>14</sup> See ROGER FISHER, ELIZABETH KOPELMAN & ANDREA KUPFER SCHNEIDER, *BEYOND MACHIAVELLI: TOOLS FOR COPING WITH CONFLICT* 32–35 (Brian Ganson ed., 1994) (discussing “partisan perceptions”).

<sup>15</sup> See Rick Ross, *The Ladder of Inference*, in *THE FIFTH DISCIPLINE FIELDBOOK* 242, 242–46 (Peter M. Senge et al. eds., 1994).

<sup>16</sup> See Chris Guthrie, *Panacea or Pandora's Box?: The Costs of Options in Negotiation*, 88 IOWA L. REV. 601, 612–36 (2003).

<sup>17</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games*, in *DOUBLE-EDGED DIPLOMACY: INTERNATIONAL BARGAINING AND DOMESTIC POLITICS* 431, 436–59 (Peter Evans, Harold K. Jacobson & Robert D. Putnam eds., 1993).

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many occasions when players need to ask for the cooperation of Fatah or Hamas, often at the risk of lower approval ratings from the Israelis or the international community. Frequently after asking for these concessions from Hamas, there is an attack on Palestinians by Israeli soldiers or settlers, which produces even lower approval ratings. As a result, it can be easy to become frustrated with Israel and correspondingly become less likely to cooperate with the Israeli Prime Minister or with policies that may, in the end, lead to success. Students who reflect on these actions are more likely to gain the ability to monitor and manage their personal emotions and take actions that foster cooperation, heightening scores, and higher approval ratings. Much like we teach students in role-plays, the conflict may be simulated, but their emotions and reactions to the situation are quite real. Because you can replay the game (as opposed to role-plays) students can learn to manage and adjust their responses over time.

Second, students can objectively identify their perceptions and can begin to understand their own assumptions while playing the game by taking the role of the opposite side. For example, after becoming frustrated with Israel while playing the Palestinian President, the same student can play the Israeli Prime Minister. It will not take long for that student to become frustrated with the Palestinian President for refusing the reconstruction aid that Israel offers, or to become frustrated with Fatah and Hamas for interfering just when cooperation with the Palestinian President was beginning to seem possible. The benefit for students in experiencing this frustration and analyzing their reactions on each side is that it allows them to feel these partisan perceptions in a way that typical role-plays do not allow.

Third, by playing in teams and designating one person as the player and the others as observers, students can watch the game progress as neutral third parties. Students can gain perspective while watching other students respond and react to the game. In class, when decisions are made in a large group, one can also see the influence of the group on the decisionmaker. The group's comments also impact the group mentality. Consequently, the students can understand the process of action and reaction within the game, but they also develop the ability to separate themselves from the expectations that come with playing the game and evaluate decisions more objectively. This is sometimes difficult for students to do in the beginning of the game because they are likely to make judgments about their peers' decisions. However, after watching gameplay for a few rounds, it becomes easier for students to develop objectivity as they engage themselves in the process of observing.

## 2. Role Reversal

*PeaceMaker* is a unique medium for teaching students an understanding of the other parties present at the negotiation table. Specifically, when students alternate between the two roles of the Palestinian President or the Israeli Prime Minister they are required to change their approach and mindset to play in that particular role and become limited to the choices available to that leader. Accordingly, students can develop empathy for both parties because they become increasingly aware of the other demands and external constraints made by local and international groups as well as the limited available options.

Encouraging students to alternate the roles they play within the game helps them to analyze past events and understand how different interpretations can arise out of a single action. For example, when playing as the Israeli Prime Minister, a decision to increase the number of work permits available to Palestinian workers or to reduce trade restrictions can have different effects. The player will likely receive a positive approval rating from the Palestinians and other members of the international community and a negative approval rating from local groups such as the Yesha (Israeli settler movement) or the general Israeli population. As a player trying to balance the impact of these different interpretations, students develop a better understanding of the other side's choices.

In addition, U.S. students also develop empathy for the situation from both perspectives (and may start to understand why the conflict has lasted so long). Often, American students will start to play the game with the assumption that systematic decisionmaking will solve the crisis and may not consider the subjective factors—such as emotions—that may come into play. The ability of the game to have students feel the frustration of each leader and see the difficulty of meeting all parties' interests is also a great way to teach this international conflict specifically and international conflict in general.

Because *PeaceMaker* is a game, there can be a tendency for students to try to "play it safe" by taking seemingly benign actions, particularly as they become more adept at the game. However, the game itself provides mechanisms that force players to take actions beyond making speeches or listening to the concerns of their constituency. This is beneficial because it encourages students to analyze their actions with an eye towards the impact that those acts will have on their success. And, because the game only moves forward when the student takes action, the student is forced to do more than just listen and learn. Thus, the student gains a deeper understanding of the process.

### 3. *Ladder of Inference*

The ladder of inference is a theory in which people look at data, have reactions to that data—including feelings and reasoning—and then make conclusions based on that data.<sup>18</sup> For example, you might look outside and see the sun, assume it is warm, and dress in summer clothes. Another person examining the same data may have had different experiences (i.e., living through very sunny but very cold winters) and reach a different conclusion. *PeaceMaker* also offers a means to teach students the ladder of inference as they reach their individual conclusions about the next “correct” action or response to take. Some may find that they were most successful when they alternated between problem solving and more aggressive actions, while others may turn away from aggressive actions and only choose the options that seem to elicit the lowest negative response. In both instances, however, students reach these conclusions based on the same observable data that they receive during gameplay.

By recording their responses and evaluating the assumptions made during gameplay, students can become more aware of their own data selection and reasoning processes. Class discussion about strategies provides students the opportunity to understand how different players within their peer group interpret the same events and reach different conclusions. Journaling can also allow students to explore their own decisionmaking process and gain awareness of why they drew certain conclusions.

#### B. *The Impact of Options*

*PeaceMaker* provides a rich opportunity for students to develop their understanding of the impact that multiple options can have on the decisionmaking process. Gameplay is contingent upon selecting one action from a variety of possible options. We have used Chris Guthrie’s article on option creation as the theoretical underpinning by which to evaluate student choices, specifically (1) option devaluation, (2) context dependence, and (3) decision regret.<sup>19</sup>

##### 1. *Option Devaluation*

Certain options lose value when they are compared to other options because the disadvantages of each option are given more weight than the

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<sup>18</sup> Ross, *supra* note 15, at 243–44.

<sup>19</sup> Guthrie, *supra* note 16.

advantages.<sup>20</sup> Generally, people worry more about performing poorly than doing well. The game provides the opportunity for students and professors to see option devaluation in action. As students discuss in class how and why they would choose each option, any devaluation or emphasis on disadvantages versus advantages can be highlighted.

In *PeaceMaker*, students must make several option evaluations before taking an action. The options for the game are divided into different categories, such as security, diplomacy, or construction. Within each category are options that range from making speeches, using diplomacy, bulldozing homes, or calling for an independent Palestinian state. Each of these options has advantages and disadvantages, but when compared to one another, the disadvantages of each option are more likely to influence a player's choice. Specifically, players are likely to choose the option that they believe will elicit the least negative response. For example, if, as the Palestinian President, a player is seeking to improve both Israeli and international perceptions, then one option is to arrest all known militants, and another is to ask to work jointly with Israeli police. Each option is likely to result in a negative response from domestic groups; however, it is more likely that the player will choose to try to work with the Israeli police over arresting all militants because the negative response is likely to be less severe. Through this process, students learn how risk aversion can be a stronger influence on decisionmaking than the desire to accomplish their original end goals.

The comparative evaluation of options by their disadvantages is often demonstrated when students within a class play the game together. Students will often debate with one another over the comparative advantages of particular options. What will develop is a discussion of which option is likely to have the least negative impact upon approval ratings. Students may also notice their personal tendencies to weigh decisions by disadvantages after highlighting this trend in class.

## 2. Context Dependence

Students also develop an understanding of how an additional or newly discovered option can influence their decision on which action to take. Guthrie suggests that the existence of an inferior option or the addition of a new option can make another option seem better.<sup>21</sup> For example, as the game progresses successfully and the Palestinian President gains both Israeli and

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<sup>20</sup> *Id.* at 612.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.* at 634.

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international support, the player has the opportunity to take actions such as declaring independence from Israel and requesting control over Gaza airspace. In comparison to the options available prior to this success, such as requesting joint cultural activities, these actions initially appear radical; however, in the context of growing stability between Palestine and Israel, choosing to request control over the Gaza airspace no longer seems inconceivable.

There are so many different options in *PeaceMaker*, it is possible that players will discover new options that are available to them. After players have gained some experience with the game, they develop strategies that repeatedly employ the same actions. Players who want to be cooperative may rely on giving speeches and offering aid more often than using different security measures. However, players will discover that a strategy that was successful during a calm game may not be as effective in a tense or violent game. It is usually when students are playing at these different levels that they rediscover the other options available. When this occurs, the standby actions once relied upon can appear superior or less cooperative than other actions. As a result, students will adapt their game strategies to include this new option until it does not prove successful on the basis of its comparison to previous options.

### 3. *Decision Regret*

When playing *PeaceMaker*, students usually experience regret when they learn that there has been a no-confidence vote or that they have started the Third Intifada (unless their game goal was to see how few moves it would take to be voted out of office!) In other words, they experience regret when they learn they have lost the game. At this time, those students who have recorded each action taken will look back and ask, "What went wrong?" The existence of multiple options can heighten these feelings of regret and can encourage players to re-evaluate their strategy.<sup>22</sup>

The benefit of *PeaceMaker* is that students can play the game repeatedly, trying different options until they have evaluated outcomes and have chosen a strategy that works for them. Discussing feelings of discouragement or regret in the classroom, and asking students to reflect on them through journaling can help them to understand why they made the choices that they did and re-evaluate their decisionmaking process. Specifically, it can help them to determine if they fell prey to the pitfalls of context dependency or

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<sup>22</sup> See *id.* at 634–35.

option devaluation and develop ways to monitor themselves during the negotiation process.

### *C. Two-Level Diplomacy and the Shadow of the Tribe*

The model of two-level diplomacy suggests that diplomats work towards an agreement with their counterparts that both maximizes national interests and satisfies the demands of domestic constituents.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, *PeaceMaker* allows players to measure their success in balancing these interests by monitoring both their overall scores and the thermometers of other groups and other leaders. This game helps players understand that successful resolution of international conflict is contingent on the approval of both domestic and international actors.

Students must assume the agendas of either the Israeli Prime Minister or Palestinian President during gameplay because their approval ratings in either role are dependent upon their understanding of both international and domestic concerns. Accordingly, players must identify which actions produce a positive reaction in international and domestic groups. As in the real world, much of this information comes from experience interacting with each entity within a conflict. By playing the game, students can determine what the interests of these different groups are and how these sometimes conflicting interests can coexist. Often the only way to discover an entity's real interests is to employ proposals to determine what they will or will not accept in order to gauge their response. Option creation (and rejection) reveals interests.

One of the key assets of the game is the two thermometers constantly tracking approval ratings. They allow the students to see and experience the two-level diplomacy theory at work. A player can immediately see the impact of any particular action, and how that action might please the international community—but not local supporters. The balancing act is always visible and salient. The balancing act also helps students learn about constraints on the bargaining zone created by internal groups and how leaders must work within these constraints. The options in *PeaceMaker* that allow the leader to get advice before acting also demonstrate the two-level action. Domestic and international groups will not give the same advice, and this becomes apparent as the participant moves through the game. Finally, the two different ways to lose the game—defeat in an election or setting off violence—clearly demonstrate the balancing act created in two-level diplomacy.

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<sup>23</sup> Putnam, *supra* note 17, at 436.



## THE CLASSROOM CAN BE ALL FUN AND GAMES

### VI. CONCLUSION

*PeaceMaker* has wide applicability in teaching theories of dispute resolution. The game is an effective accompaniment to reading materials and classroom lecture. Through *PeaceMaker*, students can analyze options, react to outside sources, and experience the immediate consequences of their decisions. Using the game in the classroom fosters discussion and encourages students to share their experiences and learn from one another's mistakes and successes.

*PeaceMaker* provides the vehicle to introduce and illustrate dispute resolution concepts such as partisan perceptions, role reversal, the Ladder of Inference, option generation, and two-level diplomacy. It is an engaging and different way to interact in role-play without the constraints of typical simulations.

